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Soviet Warships in the Baltic Sea

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REFERENCES

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1. At about 0830 on 22 November 1952, a Soviet destroyer was sighted off Tiiskeri (N 60-10, E 26-15), steering an easterly course. Visibility was poor, with occasional blizzards. The destroyer, which was about 1.5 or 2 nautical miles away, had three funnels and a raised platform with free guns between the second and third funnels. She was followed at about 500 meters by three smaller vessels which had thin funnels, a low bridge, and a flush fantail. The speed of this formation was estimated at about eight knots.²
2. At about 1600 hours EET on 22 November 1952, a Soviet formation was sighted off the Tallinn lightship (N 59-43, E 24-44). It consisted of eight vessels proceeding in line ahead about 400 meters apart, at a cruising speed of about 12 knots. They came from the direction of the Tallinn lightship and entered the Porkkala prohibited area. They were all of one type, and were between 70 and 80 meters long, with a straight bow and a short forecastle, on which was mounted a gun fitted with splinter shields. Behind the short, squat bridge structure was a mast, a rather low funnel, and a long, low afterdeck with low superstructure and a square stern. No armament was observed on the afterdeck, nor were any figures or names observed on the hulls.³ These vessels were met by three other craft just before reaching the prohibited area. The latter came from the direction of Porkkala and were similar to motor minesweepers, having a clipper bow, a short forecastle, an enclosed conning tower, and a long afterdeck with a square stern. [redacted] pilot vessels. One of them took the lead of the group, while the two others proceeded abeam.
3. At 1300 on 13 December 1952, a Soviet destroyer was sighted off Moevenhaken, 20 nautical miles southwest of Baltiysk (N 54-38, E 19-52), in very hazy weather.⁴ This twin-funnelled destroyer, which steered a south-southwesterly course and turned to a north-northwesterly course about 15

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minutes later, was similar to a German HANS LODY class destroyer.

4. At 1700 hours on 13 December 1952, at dusk, a formation of three Soviet warships was sighted about 25 nautical miles northwest of Baltiysk. [REDACTED] two of them were destroyers, and the other a cruiser. The vessels had two funnels each; [REDACTED] details because of the darkness. The three ships were proceeding in line at a distance of between 1,800 and 2,000 meters [REDACTED] they were cruising in company, because of the darkness. They were steering a southwesterly course, [REDACTED] assumed that they were heading for Baltiysk.

5. At about 1100 hours on 16 December 1952, about 22 nautical miles west-northwest of Baltiysk, a destroyer with two funnels was spotted about six nautical miles away. After steering a northwesterly course, it suddenly reversed course, apparently to return to Baltiysk. At about 1300 hours, what may have been the same destroyer reappeared from the direction of Baltiysk. The destroyer, which was making between 14 and 16 knots, had two funnels of the same type, with tops slightly curved toward the stern and without smoke hoods or black top bands, two superimposed single-barrel gun turrets on the foredeck, two similar gun turrets, with one gun each, aft, and a mattress-shaped radar set on the bridge. The destroyer hoisted a signal flag at her port signal yard and shortly thereafter swung to port, setting its course for Baltiysk.⁵

1. [REDACTED] Comment. These coordinates for Tiiskeri are given as they appeared in the original report, although Tiiskeri has not been located.
2. [REDACTED] Comment. The destroyer here mentioned is possibly a LENIN class vessel. As all destroyers of this class in the Baltic were either sunk or seriously damaged during the war, no three-funneled destroyers have been reported in the Baltic since World War II. It is possible, however, that the Soviets have repaired one of these destroyers. The three smaller vessels were presumably minesweepers.
3. [REDACTED] Comment. These vessels are believed to be T class minesweepers.
4. [REDACTED] Comment. This sentence appears to be garbled, since Moevenhaken is not to the southwest of Baltiysk, but is well to the northeast, at N 55-05, E 20-42.
5. [REDACTED] Comment. A Soviet destroyer type with two funnels curved toward the stern and without smoke hoods is unknown here. The vessel [REDACTED] was possibly a LENINGRAD class destroyer.

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